

The Galway Fly Tying Guild has been meeting and tying flies in Galway since the 1970s. It consists of a group of people who meet once a week during the closed trout season to tie flies. The meetings are in the excellent facility of the Galway Bridge Centre where the card players' tables and good lighting suit our purposes very well. There are a number of experienced regulars who tie and exchange patterns. New members are always welcome and we will help any beginner with advice on materials and with demonstrations of techniques.

A wide range of flies are tied, matching the fishing interests of the members. Flies for Lough Corrib are possibly the most popular, but a visitor will find members tying salmon flies, little dry flies for rivers, boobies for rainbows and who knows what else.

Visitors from abroad are particularly welcome. We are always interested to see what works in other conditions and climates and we hope that we may have been responsible for the introduction of one or two new flies to waters far away

The charge is €20 per head for the season to cover rent and minor expenses. Students pay €10, under-18s go free.

The meetings are at the Bridge Club, St Mary's Road, Galway, on Fridays from 1 October to 15 February, from 8.00 to 10.00 p.m. Contact Robbie Pitman 0863617361 or Denis Healy 0857540180.

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### **Starting Materials:**

A beginner will need some basic tools and some materials. There is a huge array of materials one can buy and we advise beginners to take their time rather than end up with a lot of stuff that they never use (it happens us all). It is best to watch other people, ask questions and take advice and decide what you want as you go along.

Here is a list for starters.

### **Equipment: The essentials.**

**Vice.** To hold the hook. Make sure the clamp is wide enough for most tables.

**Bobbin holder.** To hold your thread

**Hackle pliers.** To grip feathers.

**Scissors.** Needs a fine tip. Be sure to inspect how it closes before you purchase.

**Dubbing needle.** Basically, a needle with a handle for applying varnish. Has other uses too.

Not quite essential but useful is a **whip finisher** for tying off the head.

**Hooks.** For standard wetflies the best hooks are Kamasan 175 in sizes 10 or 12. (Higher numbers are for smaller hooks). If you want a lighter hook, for example for a floating dry fly, Kamasan 170 hooks suit.

### **Materials:**

Here are some basics.

**Tying thread** in grade 6/0 or 8/0. Black is essential, followed by olive and brown.

**Oval tinsel.** Gold and silver. Fine or medium diameter.

**Flat tinsel.** Gold and silver.

**Fur.** Seal's fur or seal's fur substitute. There are packets available with a dozen colours. The most common colours used in Corrib wet flies are black, claret, medium olive, sooty olive, golden olive fiery brown, yellow, red.

**Feather.** You can buy loose feathers in smaller packages and this may be good at first. Later you will probably want to buy **capés**, usually from a cock bird. These can be expensive so be sure you know what you want and get advice. It may make sense to split your purchase with another tyer. The main colours to start with are black and red game. Red game is not bright red. It is the colour of a red hen or red cow. Other often-used colours are dark olive, golden olive, ginger and claret.

Other feathers to get, listed with the more often used first, are:

- Bronze mallard. For wings and tails and wrap-around.
- Cock pheasant tail. For bodies of nymphs, for tails.
- Hen pheasant wings. For wings mostly. Hen pheasant tail also.
- Golden pheasant crest and tippets. For tails.
- Peacock herl. For bodies.

**Floss.** Black for Black Pennel. They are described by their Glo-brite numbers. No. 11 is in a lot of flies. Decide what colours you want as you go along.

**Hair.** There are many uses for different types of hair, from little dry flies to large salmon flies. Advice here is to not purchase until you observe tyers using hair and decide what you want to try yourself.

The above is a beginning list and will get you started.

A couple of good fly patterns for the Corrib are:

**Sooty plus.**

This is a standard sooty olive or blae sooty (read on below) with the plus of a palmered black feather and the omission of any throat hackle. Tied on the recommendation of Jim Riddell. For olives in April but also worth a shot during the earlier duckfly hatch at the end of March.

Hook: Size 12

Tail: A few fibres of bronze mallard.

Rib: Fine oval gold tinsel.

Body: Sooty olive seal's fur.

Hackle: Black cock palmered.

Wing: Bronze mallard for standard sooty olive, or pale grey duck or jay or starling primary feather for a blue wing, or split the colour difference with some pale mallard wing as you wish.

### **The TK**

Red and yellow seem to work well together at the latter end of the season and here is one good way to combine them.

Hook: Standard size 12

Tail: Golden pheasant crest

Rib: Silver wire

Body: Golden Olive seal's fur

Hackles: A red and yellow hackle paired and palmered together.

Wing: A slip of dark brown hen wing or other dark brown feather.

Tying notes: The yellow hackle is a pale rather than bright yellow. Orange or hot orange can be substituted for the red.

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